



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/680,277	10/06/2000	Je Hong Kim	2658-0242P	8486

7590 04/04/2002

Birch Stewart Kolasch & Birch LLP
PO Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747

EXAMINER

RUDE, TIMOTHY L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2871

DATE MAILED: 04/04/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/680,277

Applicant(s)

KIM ET AL.

Examiner

Timothy L Rude

Art Unit

2871

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 October 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,7,8,11,13-16 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6,9,10,12 and 17 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 October 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☒ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Oath/Declaration

1. It does not identify the citizenship of each inventor.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference sign(s) not mentioned in the description: Figure 3, items 60 and 74 and Figure 7, items 41 and 43. A proposed drawing correction, corrected drawings, or amendment to the specification to add the reference sign(s) in the description, are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

3. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: Some of the disclosed units of measure are incorrect. For example, page 8, lines 8-10, cite a distance between unit patterns of hundreds of meters.

Appropriate correction to eliminate substantive errors in the specification is required.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 15 is objected to because it is based upon claim 15. For examination purposes, claim 15 shall be considered based upon claim 14. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As to claim 18, the recitation "is gradually short as far away" is unclear. For examination purposes the recitation shall be considered as -- gets gradually shorter as said unit patterns get farther away --. Appropriate correction is required.

Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Applicant's admitted prior art (APA).

As to claim 1, APA discloses a back light unit in Figures 1 and 2 (page 1, line 14 through page 4, line 5), in a liquid crystal display, comprising: a light input, 20, for leading a light path of a light beam to the rear side thereof to obtain focusing (reflection of the light beam substantially into the light guide) of the light beam.

APA does not explicitly disclose a high degree of focusing.

Since APA discloses a light input, 20, for focusing light substantially into the light guide, it would be an obvious expedient to highly focus the light input to maximize illumination efficiency. Motivational advantages include a more brilliant display image, reduced light source wattage requirements, improved battery life in mobile display units, reduced bright lines in the display near the light source, and better performance when used in combination with certain light guide internal reflection patterns (lateral grooves, ribs, or lens arrays).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the light input of APA to be highly focused.

As to claim 2, APA discloses the back light unit according to claim 1, further comprising: a light guide, 4, for allowing the light beam from the light input to progress in the vertical direction of a liquid crystal panel in order for the light to pass up through

Art Unit: 2871

the liquid crystal panel and be seen by the viewer located in a substantially vertical direction from the liquid crystal panel plane.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-5, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of Oyama et al (Oyama) USPAT 5,808,708.

As to claim 1, APA discloses a back light unit in Figures 1 and 2 (page 1, line 14 through page 4, line 5), in a liquid crystal display, comprising: a light input, 20, for leading a light path of a light beam to the rear side thereof to obtain focusing (reflection of the light beam substantially into the light guide) of the light beam.

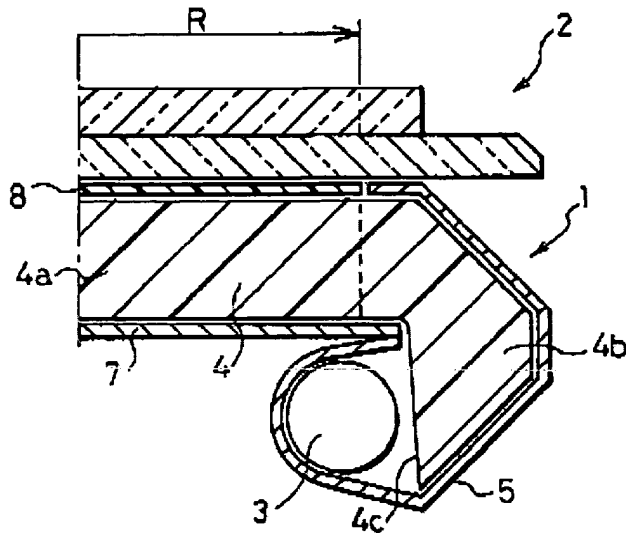
APA does not explicitly disclose a high degree of focusing.

Oyama teaches in Figure 4 a light unit comprising a light-guide plate, 4a, and a reflector, 5, having a sectional view of spiral shape that efficiently guides the light

Art Unit: 2871

(Applicant's high focus) from the light source to the light guide plate (col. 6, lines 13-24).

FIG. 4



Oyama is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to add efficient reflection (high focus) to reduce bright lines in the display near the light source (col. 13, lines 33-52, especially lines 42-48).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the light input of APA with the efficient reflection (high focus) of Oyama.

As to claim 2, APA discloses the back light unit according to claim 1, further comprising: a light guide, 4, for allowing the light beam from the light input to progress in the vertical direction of a liquid crystal panel in order for the light to pass up through

the liquid crystal panel and be seen by the viewer located in a substantially vertical direction from the liquid crystal panel plane.

As to claims 3 and 4, APA discloses the back light unit according to claim 2, and a light input, 20, including: a lamp, 22, for generating the light beam; and a lamp housing, 24, reflective on the inner side thereof to lead a light path of the light beam generated from the lamp into the rear side thereof.

APA does not explicitly disclose a light-guide plate installed at height different from the light input.

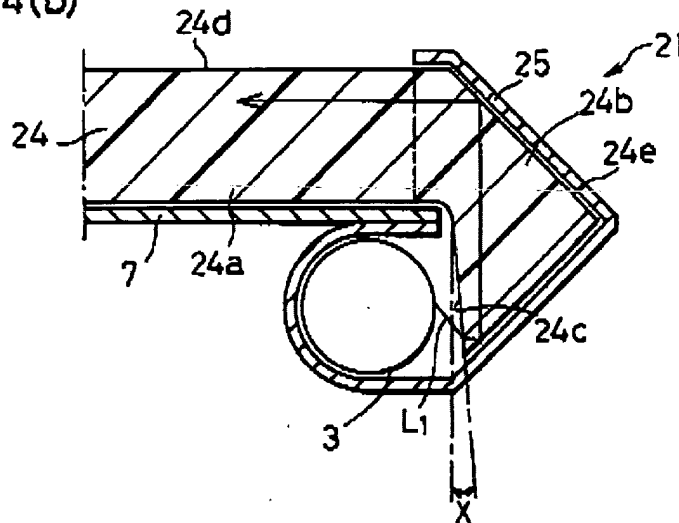
Oyama teaches in Figure 4 a light-guide plate, 4a, installed at height different from the light, 3, input to reduce the outside dimensions of the entire apparatus with respect to the area of the display space (col. 2, lines 53-60) having a sectional view of spiral shape.

Oyama is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to add a light-guide plate installed at height different from the light input to reduce the outside dimensions of the entire apparatus with respect to the area of the display space.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA with the light-guide plate installed at height different from the light input of Oyama.

As to claim 5, Oyama teaches in Figure 14(b) a light unit wherein the reflective plate, 25, is curved to obtain a desired vertical incident angle of the light beam progressing to the light-guide plate to reduce bright lines in the display near the light source (col. 13, lines 33-52, especially lines 42-48).

FIG.14(b)



Oyama is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to use a light unit wherein the reflective plate is curved to obtain a desired vertical incident angle of the light beam progressing to the light-guide plate to provide desired illumination characteristics.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA with the curved reflective plate of Oyama.

As to claim 7, Oyama teaches in Figure 14(a) a light unit wherein the lamp housing includes at least one reflective plate for cutting off the light beam progressing

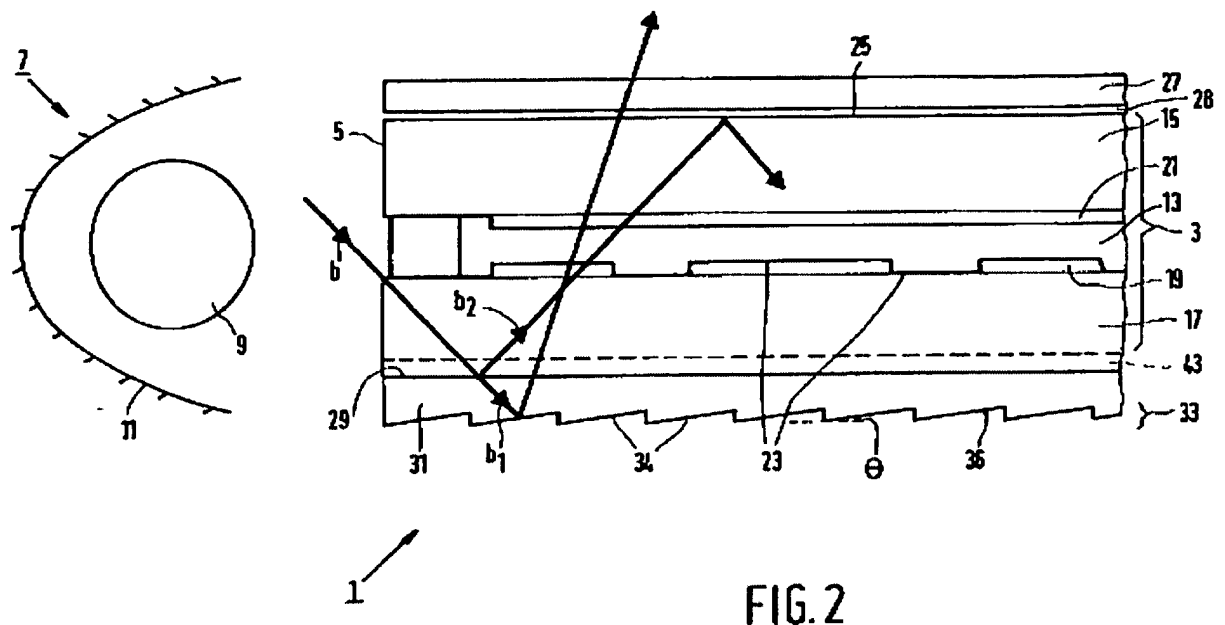
directly from the lamp into the light-guide plate, the at least on reflective plate being a protrusion of the inner surface of the lamp housing.

Oyama is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to use a reflective plate for cutting off the light beam progressing directly from the lamp into the light-guide plate, the at least on reflective plate being a protrusion of the inner surface of the lamp housing to provide desired illumination characteristics.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA with the protruding reflective plate of Oyama.

8. Claims 8, 11, 13, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of Oyama as applied to claim 2, in view of Broer et al (Broer) USPAT 5,808,713.

As to claims 8, and 11, Broer teaches in Figure 2 a light unit wherein the light-guide plate includes a plurality of unit patterns formed on one side thereof in parallel with the lamp, the plurality of unit patterns allowing the light beam from the lamp housing to be progressing perpendicularly into the liquid crystal panel.



Broer is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to use a light unit wherein the light-guide plate includes a plurality of triangular section unit patterns formed on one side thereof in parallel with the lamp, the plurality of unit patterns to cause the light beam from the lamp housing to be progressing perpendicularly into the [front of the (claim 16 only)] liquid crystal panel.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA with the triangular section unit patterns of Oyama.

As to claim 13, APA discloses in Figures 1 and 2, the use of a light unit wherein the light-guide plate is disposed at the rear side of transmissive liquid crystal panel (not

Art Unit: 2871

illustrated, but on page 1, lines 14-22), and the lamp housing, 24, leads the light beam from the lamp to the incident side of the light-guide plate, 4, disposed at the rear side of the transmissive liquid crystal panel.

As to claim 14, APA discloses in Figures 1 and 2, a light unit further comprising a rear reflective plate, 2, for reflecting the light beam from the rear surface of the light-guide plate, 4, toward the transmissive liquid crystal panel.

9. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of Oyama and Broer as applied to claim 14, and further in view of Kim USPAT 6,151,169.

As to claim 15, over APA in view of Broer teaches the use of a light unit according to claim 14 (Applicant's 15).

APA in view of Broer does not teach a light unit wherein the light-guide plate includes a plurality of prism patterns arranged on another surface thereof in intersection with the unit patterns.

Kim teaches in Figure 7 the use of a light unit wherein the light-guide plate includes a plurality of prism patterns arranged on another surface thereof in intersection with the unit patterns.

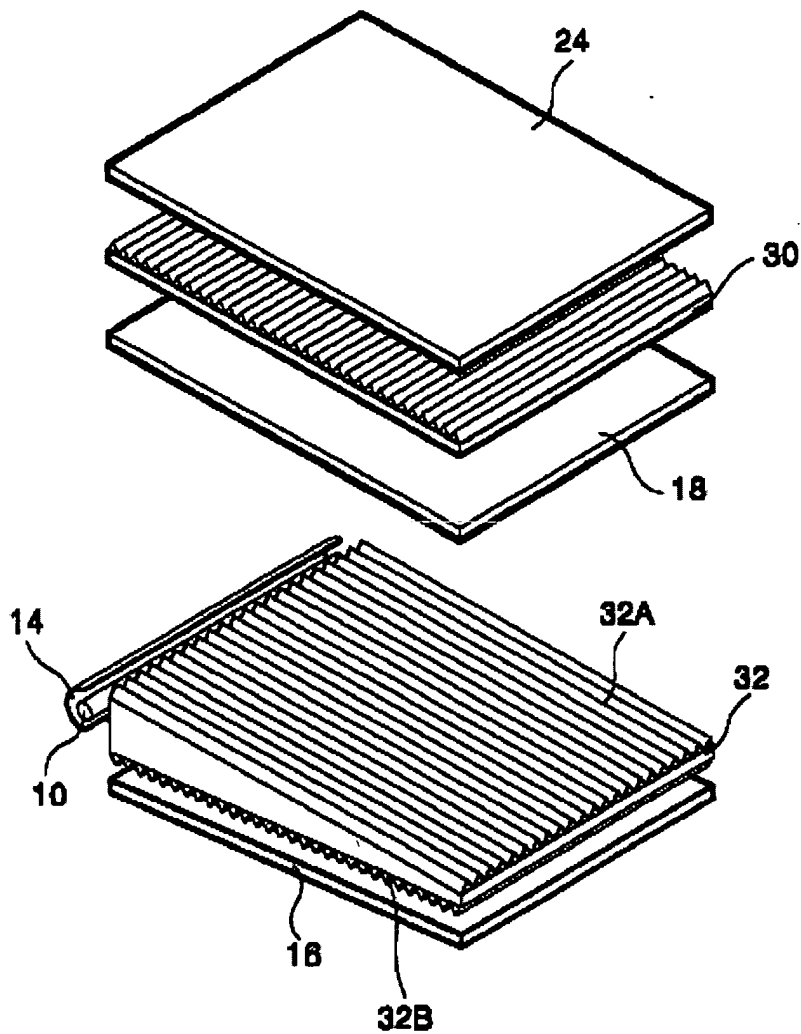


FIG. 7

Kim is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to add a plurality of prism patterns arranged on

Art Unit: 2871

another surface thereof in intersection with the unit patterns to enhance the utilization ratio of the light generated by the lamp (col. 6, line 58 through col. 7, line 15).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA in view of Broer with the plurality of prism patterns arranged on another (upper) surface of the light guide plate of Kim.

10. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of Oyama and Broer as applied to claim 8, and further in view of Egawa et al (Egawa) USPAT 6,295,104 B1.

As to claim 16, APA in view of Oyama and Broer teach a transmissive liquid crystal panel with a the light unit according to claim 8, wherein the lamp housing leads the light beam from the lamp to the incident side of the light-guide plate.

APA in view of Oyama and Broer do not explicitly disclose a light unit wherein the light-guide plate is disposed at the front side of the liquid crystal panel.

Egawa teaches in Figures 1 and 2 a light guide plate dispose on the front side of a liquid crystal panel to provide illumination without degrading contrast and without generating a moiré pattern (col. 4, lines 11-17).

FIG. 1

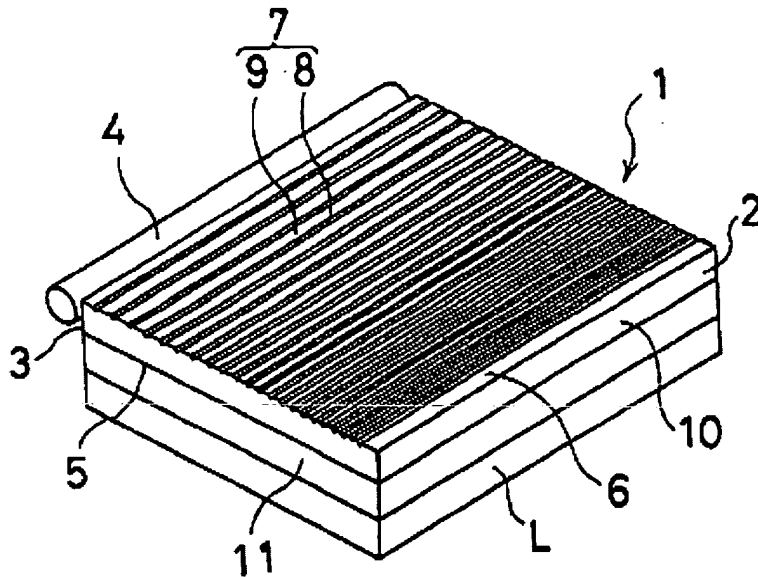
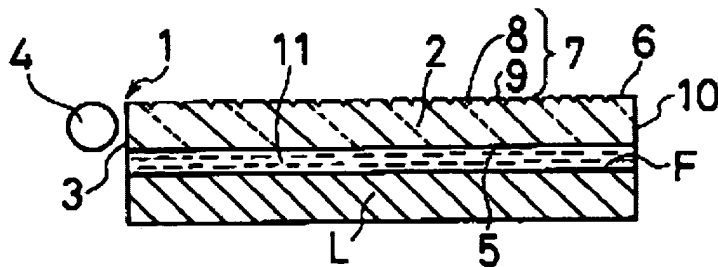


FIG. 2



Egawa is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to add a light guide plate disposed on the front side of a liquid crystal panel to provide illumination without degrading contrast and without generating a moiré pattern.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA in view of Oyama and Broer with the light guide plate disposed on the front side of a liquid crystal panel of Egawa.

As to claim 18, APA in view of Oyama and Broer teaches the light unit according to claim 8.

APA in view of Oyama and Broer do not explicitly disclose a distance between the unit patterns that gets gradually shorter as said unit patterns get farther away (Applicant's is gradually short as far away) from the incident side of the light-guide plate.

Egawa teaches in Figures 1 and 2 a light guide plate wherein a distance between the unit patterns that gets gradually shorter as said unit patterns get farther away from the incident side of the light-guide plate so that the brightness becomes nearly uniform at any position in the transparent substrate (light guide) without being influenced by the distances from the light source lamp (col. 12, lines 34-50).

Egawa is evidence that ordinary workers in the art of liquid crystals would find the reason, suggestion, or motivation to add a distance between unit patterns that gets gradually shorter as said unit patterns get farther away from the incident side of the light-guide plate so that the brightness becomes nearly uniform at any position in the light guide without being influenced by the distances from the light source lamp.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art of liquid crystals at the time the invention was made to modify the LCD of APA in view of

Art Unit: 2871

Oyama and Broer with the distance between unit patterns that gets gradually shorter of Egawa.

Allowable Subject Matter

11. Claims 6, 9, 10, 12, and 17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

As to claim 6, a search of relevant prior art did not disclose, alone or in combination, the light unit according to claim 3, wherein the reflective *plate is curved to have about $\pm 20^\circ$ to 30° in a vertical incident angle of the light beam* progressing to the light-guide plate.

As to claim 9, a search of relevant prior art did not disclose, alone or in combination, the light unit according to claim 8, wherein the unit pattern includes: a *land protruded* at a desired incline from one surface of the light-guide plate; and a groove extended from the land to have a desired incline.

Claim 10 is dependent upon claim 9 with allowable subject matter above.

As to claim 12, a search of relevant prior art did not disclose, alone or in combination, the light unit according to claim 11, wherein *an angle between one surface of the light-guide plate and one surface of the groove is about 40° to 50°, and an angle between one surface of the light-guide plate and another surface of the groove is about 30° to 90°.*

As to claim 17, a search of relevant prior art did not disclose, alone or in combination, the light unit according to claim 16, wherein *a distance between the start point and the angular point of the land is within 200 μ m.*

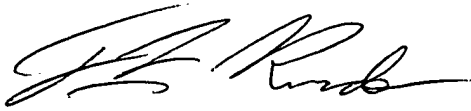
10. For convenience, Applicant may also review Fredriksz et al USPAT 5,477,423. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Timothy L Rude whose telephone number is (703) 305-0418. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William L Sikes can be reached on (703) 308-4842. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7724 for regular communications and (703) 308-7725 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4900.

Application/Control Number: 09/680,277
Art Unit: 2871

Page 18

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. L. Rude", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

TLR
March 25, 2002

Timothy L Rude
Examiner
Art Unit 2871

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TOANTON", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

TOANTON
PRIMARY EXAMINER